

Rubric for Assessing Independent Verification Organizations

Pursuant to 9 V.S.A. § 3044(6) and CP 121.03(f)(ii)

Requirements for Independent Verification Organizations

- I. An independent organization authorized by the Attorney General to verify that food has not been produced with genetic engineering shall meet the following criteria:
 - a. The organization has a published standard for ensuring verified foods have not been knowingly or intentionally produced from or commingled with food or seed produced with genetic engineering. This standard must meet the requirements of § II of this rubric and be regularly reviewed and revised.
 - b. The organization's assessments are carried out by a party independent from the producer applying for verification.
 - c. The organization enforces a protocol for noncompliance with its standards, including the potential loss of verification.
- II. An independent organization's standard must contain the following benchmarks to ensure that verified foods have not been produced with genetic engineering:
 - a. **Traceability** of Verified Foods
 - i. **Inspection & Assessment.** The organization conducts periodic on-site inspections and annual assessments.
 - ii. **Auditing.** The organization conducts audits of the producer's supply and distribution channels, production practices, and facilities.
 - iii. **Recordkeeping.** The organization requires the producer to keep adequate records to verify that foods have not been knowingly or intentionally produced from or commingled with food or seed produced with genetic engineering and to make such records available to the organization for inspection, assessment and auditing.
 - b. **Segregation** of Verified Foods
 - i. In the case of crop production, when post-harvest testing for genetically engineered material is not required, the organization confirms that adequate buffer zones and other practices are in place in order to prevent contamination and cross-pollination with genetically engineered crops in the field.
 - ii. The organization ensures that verified foods are properly segregated from and not commingled with foods produced with genetic engineering throughout the supply chain.
 - b. **Testing** of Verified Foods
 - i. The organization requires testing for the presence of materials produced from genetic engineering, where applicable, using ELISA protein or DNA/PCR tests.
 - ii. The organization tests foods at critical control points (points where contamination with materials produced from genetic engineering could occur) in the supply chain and where accurate qualitative, quantitative, or semi-quantitative test results may be achieved.
 - iii. The organization's contamination threshold does not exceed 0.9%, by weight of food, accidental or unavoidable contamination with genetically engineered materials.